

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1, 11-12, 14, 17, 19-20, 23, and 30-31 are amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. Formal Matters:

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 8, 11, 12-14, 17, 23, 26-27, and 30-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. In relation to the rejection under §112, the Examiner alleges that each of the abovementioned claims recites the “if... then” wording in limitations that render the scope of each claim indefinite because the claims do not distinctly recite what would occur in a situation where the “if” condition is not met.

As noted in MPEP §2173.04, “[b]readth of a claim is not to be equated with indefiniteness.” Furthermore, the first sentence of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 requires only that claims “set out and circumscribe a particular area with a reasonable degree of precision and particularity.” In this case, each of the claims reciting the “if... then” wording in limitations clearly sets out what Applicants intend the scope of their invention to embrace: “if x... then y” without including the “then z” limitation that may occur when the “if x” condition is not met. Thus, since the scope of the subject matter embraced by the claims is clear and is what Applicants intend, then, for at least these reasons, Applicants assert that claims 1, 8, 11, 12-14, 17, 23, 26-27, and 30-31 comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. MPEP §2173.04.

Claims 11 and 31 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 because the claims recite a trap service order system for determining whether the service order requires a dispatch, and if so, further examining the service order to determine whether the dispatch is unnecessary, which the Examiner asserts is a cyclical limitation. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner’s attention to page 8, line 34 to page 9, line 7 of the specification,

which recite that the examining process the trap service order system uses to determine whether a service order requires a dispatch is the same examining process that the integrated service process uses to determine whether a service order requires a dispatch. Therefore, the service orders that are determined to require a dispatch by the integrated service process are also determined to require a dispatch by the trap service order system. After identifying the service order that requires a dispatch, which the integrated service process also determined requires a dispatch, the trap service order system compares the service order to a set of predefined criteria, and if the service order meets the set of criteria, the trap service order further examines the service order to determine whether the dispatch is unnecessary. Thus, the abovementioned limitation recited by claims 11 and 31 is not cyclical because the examining process used by the trap service order system to determine whether a service order requires a dispatch allows the trap service order system to identify those service orders that the integrated service process indicated requires a dispatch so that the trap service order system can then determine whether the dispatch is unnecessary.

Claims 17 and 30 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 because the claims contain vague and indefinite preambles. In response to this rejection, Applicants have amended claims 17 and 30 to clarify the preambles of claims.

II. Prior Art Rejections

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-2, 5-7, 10-11, and 13-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,920,846 to Storch et al. (hereinafter "Storch"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As amended, claim 1 recites that a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprises determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch; if the service order meets the set of predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if the dispatch is unnecessary, then canceling the dispatch associated with the service order. Similarly, amended claim 11 recites that a system for eliminating unnecessary dispatches comprises a trap service order system for

monitoring a service order generated by a service order control system and for determining whether the service order requires a dispatch, and if so, determining whether the service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch, and if so, further examining the service order to determine whether the dispatch is unnecessary. Claim 17 recites that a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprises determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates a likelihood of an unnecessary dispatch by examining selected sections of the service order; if the service order meets the predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if so, then eliminating the dispatch by correcting the service order and canceling a dispatch order for the dispatch.

Likewise, claim 30 recites that a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprises determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates a likelihood of an unnecessary dispatch by examining selected sections of the service order; if the service order meets the predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if so, then eliminating the dispatch by generating a corrected service order and determining whether the corrected service order corresponds to a dispatch order generated in response to the service order; and if so, then canceling the dispatch order. Similarly, claim 31 recites that a system for eliminating unnecessary dispatches comprises a service order control system for generating a corrected service order in response to a communication from a trap service order system; a work management center for receiving the corrected service order from the service order control system, determining whether the corrected service order corresponds to the dispatch order, and if so, then canceling the dispatch order; and the trap service order system for monitoring the service order generated by the service order control system, determining whether the service order requires a dispatch, and if so, then comparing a service order type and information in a selected field of the service order with a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch; and if so, then further analyzing the service order to determine whether the dispatch is unnecessary, and if so, then communicating with the service order control system.

Storch does not disclose a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprising determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch; if the service order meets the set of predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if the dispatch is unnecessary, then canceling the dispatch associated with the service order. In contrast, Storch discloses an integrated method for processing a service request for installation, maintenance, or repair by sending a service order to a Work Force Administration/Dispatch Out (WFA/DO) system which determines whether an outside technician needs to be dispatched by assigning a service order an exact final time estimate for work to be performed based on information associated with the class of service, Universal Service Order Codes, and Field Identifiers. Based on the number of minutes of the final time estimate, the WFA/DO system indicates whether dispatch of an outside technician is needed to complete the service request. Thus, Storch fails to disclose a method of eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprising determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch; if the service order meets the set of predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if the dispatch is unnecessary, then canceling the dispatch associated with the service request for installation.

Similarly, Storch does not disclose a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprising determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates a likelihood of an unnecessary dispatch by examining selected sections of the service order; if the service order meets the predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if so, then eliminating the dispatch by generating a corrected service order and determining whether the corrected service order corresponds to a dispatch order generated in response to the service order; and if so, then canceling the dispatch order. Instead, as noted above, Storch discloses an integrated method for processing a service request by sending a service order to a WFA/DO system which indicates whether dispatch of an outside technician is needed to complete a service request based on the number of minutes of the final time estimate determined by information associated with the class of service,

Universal Service Order Codes, and Field Identifiers of the service order. The WFA/DO system then sends the final time estimate and other information to a computer system which updates its records indicating the total available time in the specific geographic area for the date and time as indicated by the service order. Therefore, Storch fails to disclose a method for eliminating an unnecessary dispatch of a service technician comprising determining whether a service order meets a set of predefined criteria that indicates a likelihood of an unnecessary dispatch by examining selected sections of the service order; if the service order meets the predefined criteria, then determining whether the dispatch is unnecessary; and if so, then eliminating the dispatch by generating a corrected service order and determining whether the corrected service order corresponds to a dispatch order generated in response to the service order; and if so, then canceling the dispatch order.

Furthermore, Storch does not disclose a system for eliminating unnecessary dispatches comprising a service order control system for generating a corrected service order in response to a communication from a trap service order system; a work management center for receiving the corrected service order from the service order control system, determining whether the corrected service order corresponds to the dispatch order, and if so, then canceling the dispatch order; and the trap service order system for monitoring the service order generated by the service order control system, determining whether the service order requires a dispatch, and if so, then comparing a service order type and information in a selected field of the service order with a set of predefined criteria that indicates the service order is likely to cause an unnecessary dispatch, and if so, then further analyzing the service order to determine if the dispatch is unnecessary, and if so, then communicating with the service order control system. In contrast, Storch discloses a system for processing a service request comprising a WFA/DO system which determines whether an outside technician needs to be dispatched by assigning a service order an exact final time estimate for work to be performed based on information associated with the class of service, Universal Service Order Codes, and Field Identifiers, and a computer system which receives the final time estimate from the WFA/DO system and updates its records indicating the total available time in the specific

geographic area for the date and time as indicated by the service order. Thus, Storch fails to disclose Applicants' invention as embodied in claims 11 and 31.

For at least these reasons, claims 1, 11, 17, and 30-31 are allowable over Storch. Since claims 2, 5-7, 10, and 21-23 depend from claim 1, claims 13-16 and 24-27 depend from claim 11, and claims 28-29 depend from claim 17 and recite additional features, Applicants respectfully submit that Storch does not anticipate Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in claims 1, 11, 17, 30, and 31 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 3-4, 8-9, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Storch. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

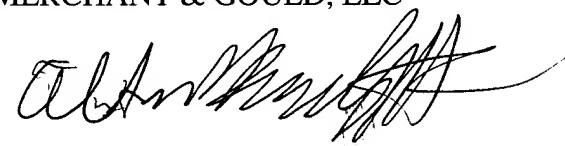
For at least the reasons stated above, claims 1, 11, 17, and 30-31 are allowable over Storch. Since claims 3-4 and 8-9 depend from claim 1 and claim 12 depends from claim 11 and recite additional features, Applicants respectfully submit that Storch does not make obvious Applicants' claimed invention as embodied in claims 3-4, 8-9, and 12.

III. Conclusion:

For at least the reasons given above, Applicant submits that claims 1-31 define patentable subject matter. The Applicant further asserts that this response addresses each and every point of the Office Action, and respectfully requests that the Examiner pass this application with claims 1-31 to allowance.

Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at 404.954.5037.

Respectfully submitted,
MERCHANT & GOULD, LLC



Alton Hornsby, III
Reg. No. 47,299

Merchant & Gould
3200 IDS Center
80 South 80th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-2215
Telephone: 404.954.5100
Customer No. 23552